



U.S. Department of State
Bureau of Educational and Cultural
Affairs
Private Sector Exchange



February 1, 2022

Dear Intern:

Welcome to the U.S. Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program, BridgeUSA. During your stay in the U.S., you will enhance your skills and expertise and you will make connections and memories that will last a lifetime. Your participation empowers you to represent your country as a 'citizen ambassador', where you will help create new and lasting relationships between our two nations.

As an intern, you are part of a U.S. Department of State cultural exchange program in which you, like thousands of other interns from around the world, will have the opportunity to share your language, culture, and customs as you enhance your skills and expertise in your future profession. Through well-structured and guided training, you will improve your knowledge of American techniques and technology, increase your understanding of American society, demonstrate your skills, and enrich your American colleagues' knowledge of your culture.

Your U.S. program sponsor, identified on your Form DS-2019, Certificate of Eligibility for Exchange Visitor Program (J-1) Status, is your first point of contact throughout your stay in the United States. If you have any questions about your exchange program, if you need assistance of any kind while you are here, immediately contact your U.S. program sponsor at the telephone number in your orientation material. This telephone number should be available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you have concerns or issues that your U.S. sponsor has not resolved, or you find you cannot reach your sponsor, please contact the U.S. Department of State through our J-1 Visa Emergency Helpline (1-866-283-9090), which is also available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, or by e-mail at JVisas@state.gov. Please add the jvisas@state.gov email address to your contacts to ensure you receive important communications from the Department.

As exciting and enriching as international exchange can be, it may present challenges. The Department of State's concern for your health, safety, and welfare includes your mental health. Please reach out to <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/get-help/immediate-help> to access the many resources available to help deal with mental health issues. BridgeUSA also has other available resources on our website, www.j1visa.state.gov, for you to check out.

As an intern on a BridgeUSA program, you will receive emails regarding alumni opportunities with over one million current and former exchange visitors. We welcome you to join the International Exchange alumni website – a place where past and present U.S. visitors find tools to advance their communities and our world. You can read more at: <https://alumni.state.gov/>

We are pleased that you made the decision to be part of this amazing program. I hope you enjoy your stay in the United States.

Sincerely,

Nicole Elkon
Deputy Assistant Secretary
Private Sector Exchange